

## **Organics Subcommittee Meeting Summary**

June 10, 2013, 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM

MassDEP, One Winter Street, Boston, MA

All presentations are posted on the MassDEP website at

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/news/advisory-committees/swac-organics-subcommittee-.html>.

### **MassDEP Updates**

John Fischer provided the following updates:

- An updated version of the Organics Action Plan will be posted to the MassDEP website list by the end of this month.
- The Massachusetts WasteWise Forum will be taking place on Thursday, June 13th, 2013 at Worcester State University from 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM. This event provides an opportunity to learn what others are doing to enhance their waste reduction programs and gain information to improve your own programs. For more information on the WasteWise Program, including Forum presentations, visit <http://www.recyclingworksma.com/wastewise/>.
- MassDEP is hoping to receive approval shortly to issue the draft proposed organics waste ban regulations for public comment. Once approved, MassDEP will hold a public comment period and public hearings. MassDEP continues to work towards an effective date for the ban in summer 2014. The notice will be emailed to the Organics Subcommittee list, posted on the MassDEP website, and published as a newspaper legal notice. Contact John Fischer at [john.fischer@state.ma.us](mailto:john.fischer@state.ma.us) if you would like to be added to the Organics Subcommittee email list.
- MassDEP continues to conduct outreach on the Organics Action Plan and the proposed ban. If you would like MassDEP to present and discuss the commercial organics waste ban at an event or meeting, please contact John Fischer at 617-292-5632 or [john.fischer@state.ma.us](mailto:john.fischer@state.ma.us).
- Documents from the May meeting, including a report prepared by Northeastern University graduate students on on-site systems for processing food waste and a Wellesley College report, are now posted on the MassDEP web site at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/recycle/reduce/commercial-institutional-and-agricultural-composting.html#2>.
- Additional case studies on commercial and institutional food waste diversion programs continue to be developed and added to the RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts web site. For more information, see <http://www.recyclingworksma.com/how-to/materials-guidance/composting-food-waste/>.

### **Best Management Practices for Commercial Food Waste Collection, Jamie Cahillane, RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts**

Jamie Cahillane of the RecyclingWorks program presented a draft guidance document on Best Management Practices for Food Waste Collection. The guidance document is intended primarily for use by health agents, and was developed using public health professionals' input through several meetings, discussions, and a survey. The proposed best management practices are focused at the location of food waste generation. For more information, see the presentation posted on MassDEP's website using the link at the top of the page.

Questions and discussion of this presentation included the following topics:

- While closeable, leak proof, and lockable containers may make waste anerobic over a long period of time, this should not be an issue because the food waste will most likely be collected before this takes place.
- Temperature storage guidelines for food waste are not included in the BMPs, but could be advantageous in some cases if there is a cool, dark area available on-site for food waste storage.
- This is purely a guidance document, and does not contain any requirements. However, it is possible that the document could be used as a basis for local health departments to specify requirements. In fact, the best management practices outlined in the presentation seem consistent with other existing food safety health regulations.
- Collection guidance provided on the number of waste pickups are written as proposed minimums and were developed based on health officials' input.
- There was a suggestion that the collection guidance on the number of waste pickups could be based on a performance standard rather than a general guideline for pickup frequency. For example, a facility using a pulper or other pre-processing technology may need less frequent pickups than stated in the guidelines.
- There was a suggestion to add input from food waste generators and haulers. The RecyclingWorks program will reach out and accept comments and questions from local health officials and other stakeholders prior to revising the proposed BMPs. This will include sending the proposed BMPs to the full Organics Subcommittee list. Any questions or comments should be addressed to Hannah Blackmer at RecyclingWorks at [Hannah.Blackmer@cetonline.org](mailto:Hannah.Blackmer@cetonline.org).

### **National Perspective on Food Waste, Dana Gunders, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)**

Dana Gunders of the Natural Resources Defense Council gave a presentation via conference call on the NRDC's report titled *Wasted: How America Is Losing Up to 40 Percent of Its Food from*

*Farm to Fork to Landfill*. The report provides a national perspective on food waste, focusing on food losses in farming, post-harvest and packing, processing, distribution, retail, food service, household, and disposal. The main takeaway point from the presentation was that source reduction and the prevention of food waste should be seen as a starting point for efforts to manage food waste, both from an economic and an environmental perspective. The data and insights from food losses at each stage of the supply chain are used to develop solutions for reducing the amount of food waste produced and increasing inefficiencies in the U.S. food supply system. For more information, please see the presentation posted on MassDEP's website using the link at top of the page, or see the full report posted on NRDC's website at <http://www.nrdc.org/food/files/wasted-food-ip.pdf>.

**Beth Israel Deaconess Composting Program, Amy Lipman, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC)**

Amy Lipman, Sustainability Director at BIDMC, gave a presentation providing an overview of the development, implementation, and success of their composting program. For more information please see the presentation posted on MassDEP's website using the link at top of the page, or for an overview of their environmental initiatives see BIDC's website at <http://www.bidmc.org/About-BIDMC/Environmental-Initiatives.aspx>.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Organics Subcommittee is not yet scheduled. An announcement will be sent to the Organics Subcommittee email list once the next meeting date is set.